

WHITE RIVER ESTATES MEETING NOTES - MARCH 3, 2009



On March 3, 2009 the City of Auburn Mayor and City staff met with residents of the White River Estates Mobile Home Park at their Club House, 4248 A Street SE, to discuss neighborhood concerns.

Staff in Attendance: MAYOR PETE LEWIS, COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER DUANNA RICHARDS, COMMUNITY SERVICES PROJECT ASSISTANT KIRSTEN REYNOLDS, POLICE CHIEF JIM KELLY, COMMUNITY PROGRAMS OFFICER ANDY GOULD, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER CHRIS HANKINS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CERT COORDINATOR REBECCA ADAMS

Community Members in Attendance: STEVEN SAMS, RITCHIE FULLER, PAUL BUTTERFIELD, RICHARD HOLMAN, RAY LAPLAN, SHIRLEY HUNT, DEANE PRELLOUGHBY, PAT BANNWARTH, LISA HARMON, KATHY GOODFELLOW, MARK AND DOROTHY WOLVINGTON, CLIFFERD AND PATRICIA SIPE, GERRY GRONWOLD, KIM RAHERT, KIM SMITH, STACY HATTON, RICHARD RATCLIFF AND ALAN TIMMONS

Welcome and Introductions

Mayor Pete Lewis welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending and asked City staff to introduce themselves. The Mayor then indicated the primary purpose of the meeting was for the City to listen to the residents' concerns, consider solutions, respond to questions they could answer immediately and identify items for follow up. The City takes notes of the meeting, which are then sent out to the attendees.

Mayor Lewis facilitated the meeting and discussed the following topics:

- ***Mayor's Update*** -- residents were encouraged to sign up for the Mayor's Update, an e-newsletter Mayor Lewis sends out every Friday about what's taken place in the City during the week, upcoming events, etc. He also uses the listserv to send out alerts about road closures, emergencies, etc. as a way to keep the community informed. Since this is a listserv, if you decide you don't want to continue receiving it you can unsubscribe.

General Questions/Comments

- Residents expressed gratitude for the assistance they received during the winter flood threat. Mayor Lewis explained this was a collaborative effort from City of Auburn and City of Pacific community members.
- ***Is there anything that can be done about loud music at the Pink Elephant Car Wash?***
Park management explained they have met with the owner of the car wash to discuss installing signage prohibiting loud music. Park management is also looking at buffering options to help block the noise for this side of the park. **UPDATE:** *Large signs were posted in August by the owner of the car wash that site the City of Auburn noise ordinance.*
- ***Is there an alternative way of entering and/or exiting the park?***
Residents were concerned about having only one entrance/exit if an emergency evacuation was necessary. The management agreed that a secondary emergency exit would be a good idea but prefer it to be for emergencies only; keeping it open as a regular entrance/exit would not be safe because it couldn't be monitored all hours of the day. The managers said they would work with City staff on possible solutions to get an emergency exit implemented that could still be controlled by the park.

- ***Is it possible to have a school bus stop sign installed for the neighborhood?***
Residents expressed concerns that drivers aren't aware there is a school bus stop at the entrance of the park; if the bus stop was posted it might make drivers more aware and drive more vigilantly. City staff will pass this request on to the Auburn School District Superintendent and come back with any updates. **UPDATE:** *The School District does not, as a practice, place any school bus stop signs.*
- ***Can the property on A Street, south of the park entrance, be cleaned up?***
Residents expressed concerns that the property looks junky which reflects onto the park. Residents would like to ask the property owner to plant some shrubs. The park management has talked to the owners who are planning to rebuild the fence.
- ***Can anything be done about log jams on the river?***
Mayor Pete Lewis explained dredging rivers and clearing log jams are prohibited in Washington State. Residents were encouraged to contact their State Legislators to let them know about the problem happening in Auburn.
UPDATE: *Auburn residents are represented by elected officials at the City, County, State and Federal level. Auburn is represented in two Counties (King and Pierce), two Legislative Districts (31st and 47th) and two Congressional Districts (8th and 9th). Elected officials representing Auburn in 2009 are:*
 - ***31st Legislative District***
- Senator Pam Roach (Auburn), (360) 786-7660, roach.pam@leg.wa.gov
 - ***47th Legislative District***
- Senator Claudia Kauffman, (306) 786-7691, kauffman.claudia@leg.wa.gov
- Representative Geoff Simpson, (360) 786-7918, simpson.geoff@leg.wa.gov
- Representative Pat Sullivan, (360) 786-7858, sullivan.pat6@lrg.wa.gov
- ***Can anything be done about the loud train noise?***
Auburn has always been a train town. The railroad's rights supersede the City's because they were here first. The City will continue efforts to mitigate any future plans; the BNSF Stampede Pass Rail Line is in the process of increasing access so residents should anticipate an increase in rail traffic in the near future.

Public Safety Related Questions/Comments

- Residents were encouraged to report everything to 9-1-1. The citizens of Auburn own the 9-1-1 system. You should call 9-1-1 whenever you have an emergency, feel something suspicious is going on, need to speak with an officer or file a report (online reporting is also available www.auburnwa.gov/Emergency/Police/Citizen_Online_Police_Reporting.asp if you would prefer to file your report that way). **PLEASE NOTE:** If calling from a cell phone you need to ask for an "Auburn Call Receiver."

Auburn shares ownership of the 9-1-1 system with other South King County cities and the calls go to a dispatch center so residents shouldn't worry about tying up the phone line when making non-emergency calls. When you call 9-1-1 it will be answered by a "Call Receiver." The Call Receiver will determine whether or not your call is an emergency to be handled right away or to have an officer make contact with you to file a non-emergency report. They will ask questions which are specifically designed to obtain information so that the proper response can be made for your call. If you want to know what the officer finds out be sure to let the Call Receiver know you DO want to be contacted by the officer when they've completed their investigation.

In addition to emergency issues, residents should also call 9-1-1 for non-emergency issues such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc. An alternative is to report them via the City website. The link is under Online Services at the top of the page and is called Online Citizen Report (half way down): www.auburnwa.gov/Business/public_works/Online_Citizen_Report.asp.

- ***Who does animal control in Auburn?***

Auburn has contracted with King County to have an animal control officer assigned to the area. Residents can call the Auburn 9-1-1 system to register animal complaints. Animal control will not respond for wild animals, i.e. possums or raccoons.

- ***Can Fish and Wildlife do anything to help with wild animals?***

Fish and Wildlife will only assist if there is a dangerous or nuisance animal; otherwise it remains the responsibility of the property owner.

- ***What should residents do if they see homeless camps developing along the river?***

Residents were encouraged to call the Auburn 9-1-1 system to report suspicious people heading towards the old homeless camp along the river. Auburn police will investigate and make sure there are no more camps set up.

- ***Block Watch & National Night Out (NNO)***

Community Program Officer Andy Gould presented information about Block Watch to the group. Block Watch is built on the concept of neighbors watching out for each other, because they know better than anyone else who belongs in a neighborhood and who doesn't. If you think "maybe I should call 9-1-1 about this," you should. Residents were encouraged to set up a Block Watch. Once the group is formed Officer Gould will have a formal training on what to watch for, how to react and how to get more neighborhood participation. It is recommended that Block Watch groups get together at least once a quarter. A gathering could include hosting a National Night Out (NNO) party which takes place annually on the first Tuesday in August. NNO provides an opportunity to increase awareness and safety in the neighborhood; the Mayor and Councilmembers take part in NNO every year.

- ***Disaster Preparedness Presentation***

Emergency Preparedness CERT Coordinator Rebecca Adams gave a brief presentation regarding programs citizens can participate in to prepare their homes, families and neighborhoods in case of a disaster. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training is comprised of 24+ hours of classroom education over an eight week period where hands-on practice in topics including first aid, triage and survival skills. Classes are free and basic safety equipment is provided.

Another program discussed was Map Your Neighborhood (MYN). The MYN program helps get neighbors together and meet with purpose; neighbors are taught how to get organized before a disaster happens. Neighborhoods need to be self-organized and willing to meet and share information together as a group. This program is now being offered in conjunction with the Block Watch training for groups interested.

Generalized disaster preparedness training is also available to interested community groups and organizations. This is a 90 minute presentation that covers general disaster preparedness information, community resources and local hazards information. Residents were encouraged to sign up for Auburn Alert; this system registers individual phone numbers (including landline and cell phones) that will be contacted in case of a disaster.

To schedule any of these classes for your neighborhood, contact the Emergency Preparedness Office at (253) 876-1925 or e-mail emergencyprep@auburnwa.gov; you can also visit their website to see training schedules: <http://www.auburnwa.gov/disaster>.

Streets/Sewer/Traffic Related Questions/Comments

- ***Can a stop sign be installed exiting the retail site just north of the park entrance?***
Public Works staff will look into this and respond to the request. **UPDATE:** *A stop sign cannot be installed from the retail development site on to White River Estates access road by the City because it is all private property.*
- ***Can a center line be painted to help direct traffic entering and exiting the park?***
A resident complained the turn lane gets backed up from people trying to get into the park which makes it hard to get out; is it possible to have a center line painted to help direct traffic? No, public funds cannot be used on private property. The City will help determine who actually owns the property. **UPDATE:** *It was determined the property is owned by A&E CHANNEL LLC+TOP SEACREST LLC (parcel # 6655000010) 2333 Carillon Point Kirkland WA 98033, Property name: Mac's Mart & Deli*
- ***Can traffic coming out of Lakeland Hills Way, heading north on A Street SE be held up during rush hour?***
It is very difficult to get in or out of the Park; traffic on A Street SE is non-stop during rush hour. Mayor Lewis explained this intersection used to have a stop light but there were a lot of accidents happening. Staff will review any other possibilities of reconfiguring the intersection to give A Street a break and allow residents to get in and out of the park. **UPDATE:** *This option will be studied as part of ongoing access study for the A Street SE corridor; recommendations will be presented once study is completed in the fall 2009.*
- ***Can the left turn light on Ellingson be extended during peak traffic hours?***
Public Works staff will review the traffic light timing at this intersection. Mayor Lewis explained there have been a lot of mechanical issues with stop lights around the city; there will be an effort to correct these issues. **UPDATE:** *Timing was reviewed and extended to the maximum safety capacity of time allowed for left hand turns.*
- ***Will the City start rounding curb corners when sidewalks are repaired / replaced?***
No, rounded curb corners are not safe for pedestrians and not good for the life of the curbs. People drive over rounded corners and they aren't designed to handle the weight of vehicles.
- ***Is it legal to use the turn lane if traveling in either direction?***
Auburn Police Chief Jim Kelly explained that yes, it's permissible to use the turn lane when traveling in either direction.

Development Related Questions/Comments

- ***What's happening in the Downtown area?***
Mayor Lewis talked about some planned activity for six different blocks in the Downtown. The City has assembled 26 parcels to promote development and is focusing on making Downtown an Urban Center that will promote retail on the ground level and residential space above. Walkways would connect Main Street shops to the new development. Auburn worked with 17 owners for the last five years to promote development for six different blocks in Downtown. One block is owned by the Auburn Regional Hospital, where they are in the process of building a parking garage and oncology center. The tavern block will be demolished to make way for the City Hall Annex Building. Once Marvel Foods relocates, the plans for this block are to be developed as a mixed use building. The blocks located SE of City Hall are owned by the City;

these blocks are planned to be built out in spring of 2010. The Cavanaugh block is currently on the market; the City will make sure whatever gets built will tie in with the surrounding plans.

Planning/Code Enforcement Related Questions/Comments

- ***Can banners be removed from the fence south of the park entrance?***

There are banners promoting alcohol located on the south side of the park entrance. The City's sign ordinance can't prohibit these types of signs because Washington State law allows it; Code Enforcement will look at the signs to make sure they are within the size and make up allowances per Auburn City Code. **UPDATE:** *All banners were removed when Code Enforcement went to check on the type of signage being used.*

- ***Are there any plans for additional parking for the transit station?***

Sound Transit has always intended to build another 450-stall parking garage on the C Street side of the railroad tracks. With the passage of their ballot measure last fall, it might actually happen sometime in the future. Sound Transit can be contact by phone **(206) 398-5000, 1(800) 201-4900** or email at **main@soundtransit.org** to voice any concerns and ideas. Parking permits for the garage are available at \$50 a month; parking spaces that are for permit only are property of the Downtown Merchants, who originally paid for them when Sound Transit built the garage.

Summary of Solutions Discussed/Action Items

1. Loud music at the Pink Elephant Car Wash was originally handled by the management of the park who talked with owners about posting signage. Since then the City has worked with the owner of the car wash. **UPDATE:** *Large signs were posted at the owners' expense in August 2009 that site the City of Auburn noise ordinance and no loud music is permitted.*
2. Public Works staff is working with the Valley Regional Fire Authority to evaluate an alternative way of entering and/or exiting the park in case of an emergency evacuation.
3. Public Works staff evaluated if a stop sign could be installed just north of the park entrance where the retail parking lot exits. It was determined that a stop sign could not be installed at this site because it is located on private property.
4. Community Services inquired with the Auburn School District if a school bus stop sign could be installed in the neighborhood. **UPDATE:** *The School District does not, as a practice, place any school bus stop signs.*
5. Code Enforcement was made aware of the complaint regarding banners on the fence south of the entrance/exit of the park that advertised alcohol. Signs can only be regulated by size and materials used; when Code Enforcement showed up the banners were already gone.
6. The entrance/exit to the park is an easement but the park management didn't know who owned the property. Community Services staff determined the property is owned by A&E CHANNEL LLC+TOP SEACREST LLC (parcel # 6655000010) 2333 Carillon Point Kirkland WA 98033, Property name: Mac's Mart & Deli.
7. Suggestions to slow traffic coming out of Lakeland Hills Way and heading north on A Street SE to be held up during rush hour is being looked at by Public Works staff; they will be reviewing other possibilities other than installing a traffic light to reconfigure the road/intersection. **UPDATE:** *An A Street Corridor Study is in process and should be completed in the fall 2009.*
8. Public Works staff reviewed the left turn traffic light at Ellingson during peak hours. The timing was extended to the maximum safety capacity of time allowed for left hand turns.

Community Services Team Contact Information:

- Duanna Richards, Community Services Manager, (253) 931-3099, or **drichards@auburnwa.gov**
- Kirsten Reynolds, Community Services Project Assistant, (253) 876-1964, or **kreynolds@auburnwa.gov**